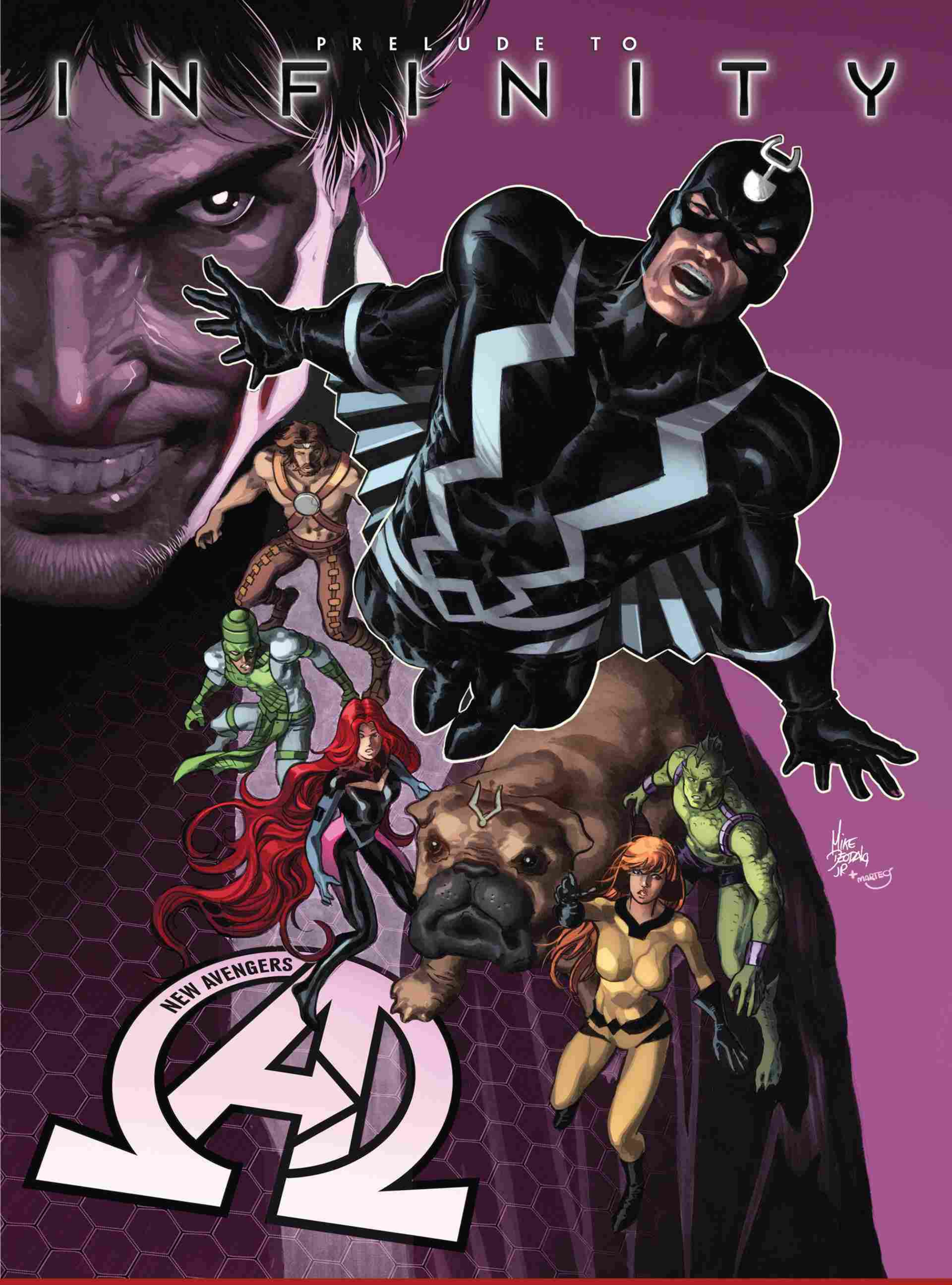
PRELUDE TO

INFINITY



MARVEL NOW!

AR HICKMAN DEODATO MARTIN 008

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS

I'M SPINNING THE CIRCLE, BROTHER. COGS IN AN INHUMAN MACHINE.

MAXIMUS THE MAKER IS BUILDING SOMETHING WICKED. BUT DON'T BLAME ME...THIS WASN'T MY IDEA.

IT WAS YOURS.

WAKANDA CANNOT WIN A WAR WITH ATLANTIS. THE QUEEN--YOUR SISTER--HAS ENEMIES. THESE ENEMIES WHISPER...AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE HER FALL.

TELL HER I WANT PEACE. I WILL OFFER FAVORABLE TERMS, AND IN EXCHANGE, I ASK ONLY FOR A CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES. REGARDLESS OF HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT ME, YOU KNOW WE HAVE BETTER THINGS TO BE DOING THAN SPILLING BLOOD.

TANGENTIAL SCENARIOS...GAME THEORY FOR NATION BUILDING. TWO COUNTRIES AT WAR WITH ONE ANOTHER. AN OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF TO POSSIBLY END THEIR CONFLICT.

POSSIBLE PEACE BETWEEN ATLANTIS AND WAKANDA, BECAUSE OF THE THREAT OF INCURSIONS.

"IS THIS GOING TO BE ENOUGH?"

INFINITE WORLDS, T'CHALLA. YOU KNOW IT ISN'T.

AS YOUR QUEEN, LET ME OFFER YOU MY WORD...WE ARE READY TO ADMINISTER WAKANDAN JUSTICE. WE ARE READY FOR WAR. NAMOR SUES FOR PEACE...BUT BLOOD DEMANDS BLOOD.

MAKE READY YOUR ARMIES, GENERAL. WAKANDA IS GOING TO WAR.

THE ILLUMINATI

BLACK BOLT
Celestial Messiah

NAMOR
Imperius Rex

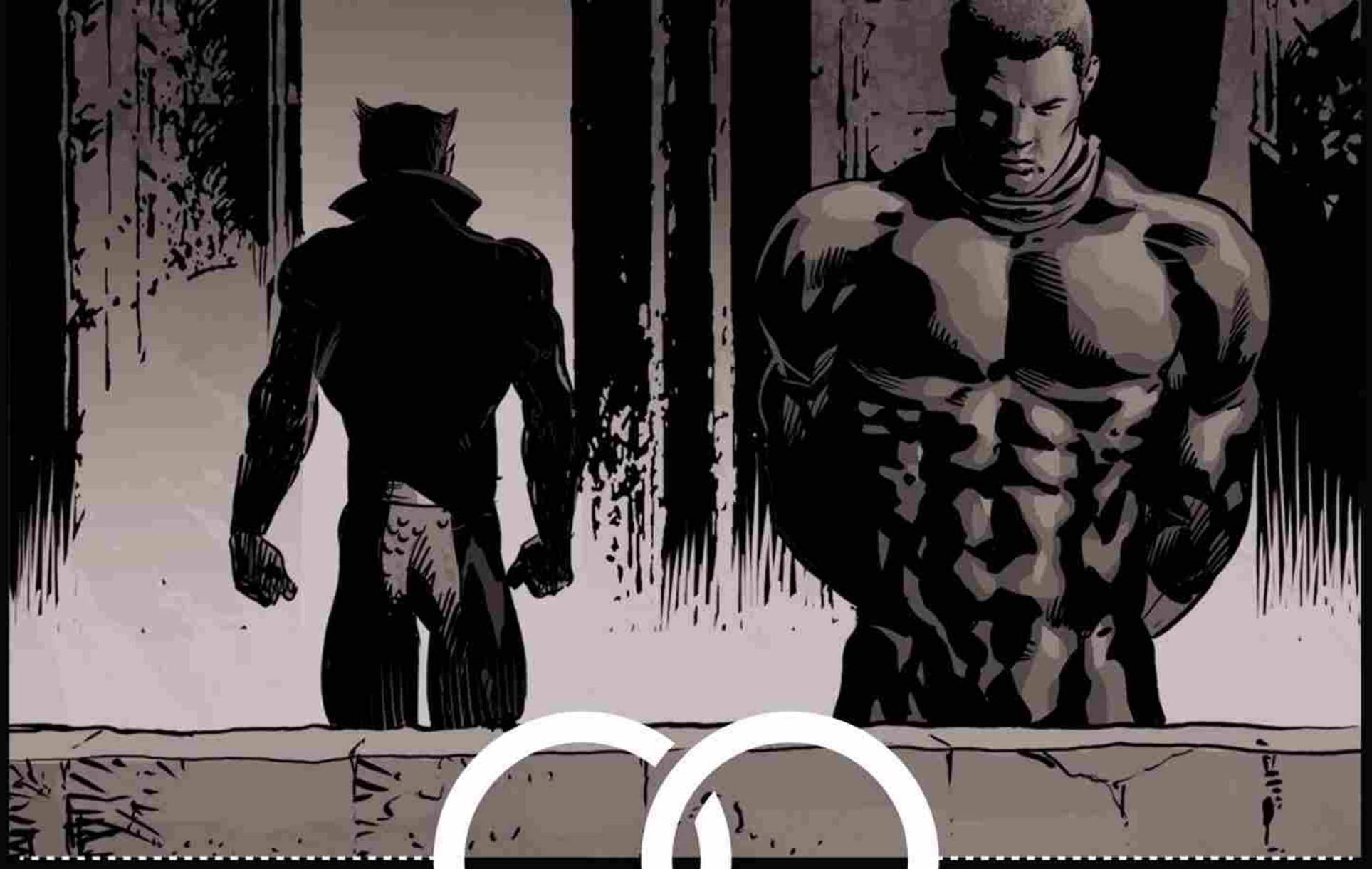
REED RICHARDS
Universal Builder

IRON MAN
Master of Machines

BEAST
Mutant Genius

DOCTOR STRANGE
Sorcerer Supreme

BLACK PANTHER
King of the Dead



“WHAT MAXIMUS MADE”

WRITER: JONATHAN HICKMAN
ARTIST: MIKE DEODATO

COLOR ARTIST: FRANK MARTIN
LETTERER: VC’s JOE CARAMAGNA
COVER ART: MIKE DEODATO & MARTE GRACIA

ASSISTANT EDITOR: JAKE THOMAS
EDITORS: TOM BREVOORT with LAUREN SANKOVITCH
EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PUBLISHER: DAN BUCKLEY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE

© 2013 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.
WWW.MARVEL.COM

AVENGERS TOWER.
ONE WEEK LATER.

FWASSH!

YOU'RE LATE.

SORRY.

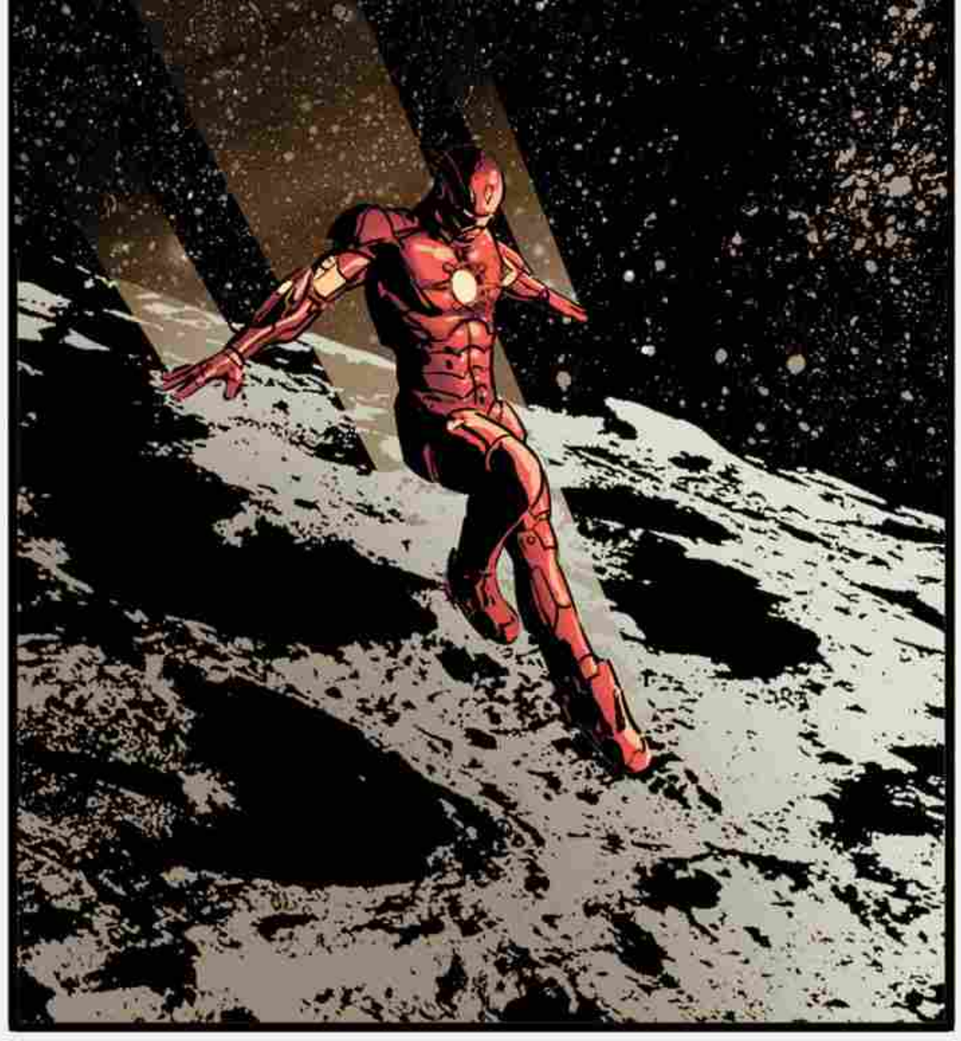
TRANSLOCATING TEMPORAL PLANES DECAYED THE SIGNAL. I'LL FIND A SOLUTION FOR THAT.

WHEN DID YOU GET BACK PLANET-SIDE?

A COUPLE DAYS AGO.

GOOD. YOU'RE NEEDED HERE.

I SHOULD ASK, HOW WAS DEEP SPACE?



I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT LATER.

RIGHT NOW, WE HAVE OTHER PROBLEMS.

A FEW HOURS AGO, THE AVENGERS LEFT THE PLANET TO DEAL WITH A POTENTIAL PAN-GALACTIC THREAT.

I BEGGED OFF TO MARSHAL EARTH IF THEY WERE TO FAIL...

BUT WE BOTH KNOW THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN THAT. BOTH THE THREAT AND MY REASON FOR STAYING.

GO ON.

I THINK EVERYTHING IS BREAKING DOWN.

THIS WORLD, THIS SYSTEM, OUR GALAXY...THE FUNDAMENTAL UNDERPINNINGS OF... WELL, LIKE I SAID... EVERYTHING.

I TAKE IT YOU HAVE SOMETHING IN MIND.

I THINK IT'S BREAKING DOWN, AND YOU AND I NEED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

WHAT WOULD YOU CALL WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING, ANTHONY?

NOT ENOUGH. THINK MORE PROACTIVE.

THE ONLY ONE THAT MATTERS.

YOU WANT TO ELIMINATE SOME VARIABLES.

ATTILAN.
HOME OF THE INHUMANS. CURRENTLY OVER MANHATTAN.

"I'M FINISHED, BROTHER..."

I HAVE MADE A MASTERPIECE.

WELL...

MASTERPIECES.

I'VE BEEN BUSY.

THE HOUSING FOR THE TERRIGEN CRYSTALS HAS BEEN REINFORCED.

I'M COMPRESSING LIGHT, HEAT AND ALL THE FUNDAMENTAL FORCES OF CREATION IN THE HEART OF THE MACHINE, AND WE DON'T WANT ANY OF THE SACRED MIST TO ESCAPE INTO THE CITY.

RANDOM TERRIGENESIS IS NO WAY TO KEEP A SECRET, IS IT?

I KNOW, I KNOW...

YOU WERE ALREADY CONFIDENT ABOUT THE DEVICE... YOU'RE MUCH MORE INTERESTED IN THE *OTHER*.

SIGH... FOLLOW ME.

NOW THIS...THIS TOOK SOME DOING.

BUILDING A PORTAL WASN'T MUCH OF A PROBLEM-- MAINTAINING A LOCAL FIELD IS HARDER THAN YOU'D THINK, BUT IT'S NO DIFFICULTY FOR A...

WHAT?

NO, NEVER MIND.

TOO MANY VOICES IN THIS PLACE.

FINDING A HABITABLE DIMENSION WITH THE PARAMETERS YOU WANTED WAS A BIT HARDER TO DO.

STILL...HERE IT IS. HERE, ALL SOUNDS ARE RENDERED WITHOUT PITCH...TRY IT OUT.

THANK YOU, BROTHER.

YOU'RE WELCOME!

AND NOW YOU'RE FREE TO HAVE YOUR SUPER-SECRET MEETINGS THAT I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO KNOW ABOUT BUT DO BECAUSE I PUT A TRACKER IN LOCKJA--

UH-OH.

"TROUBLE."

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

"RUN FOR YOUR LIFE, MAXIMUS...ONE OF US HAS TO LIVE AND I'D RATHER IT BE YOU?"

UNDERSTOOD, BROTHER... YOU'RE A GOOD MAN.

DON'T WORRY... I'LL MAKE A FANTASTIC KING.

HUSBAND.

WE NEED TO TALK.

LOOK AT WHAT WE'VE BUILT TOGETHER WITH OUR MINDS, MY KING.

WE DO NOT SPEND ENOUGH TIME HERE, SHARING OF OURSELVES...

YOU HAVE BEEN HIDING YOUR THOUGHTS FROM ME...

...AND I DO NOT LIKE IT. WE ARE LESS BECAUSE OF IT.

AREN'T WE?

PERHAPS.

BUT IF I HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN COMPLETE HONESTY AND THE LOSS OF THIS PLACE, OR DENYING US THIS PLACE AND MAINTAINING THE MEMORY OF IT...

THEN I CHOOSE THE LATTER.

YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THAT, CAN'T YOU, MY LOVE?

NO. NO, I CANNOT.

WE ARE ONE... OR WE ARE NOTHING.

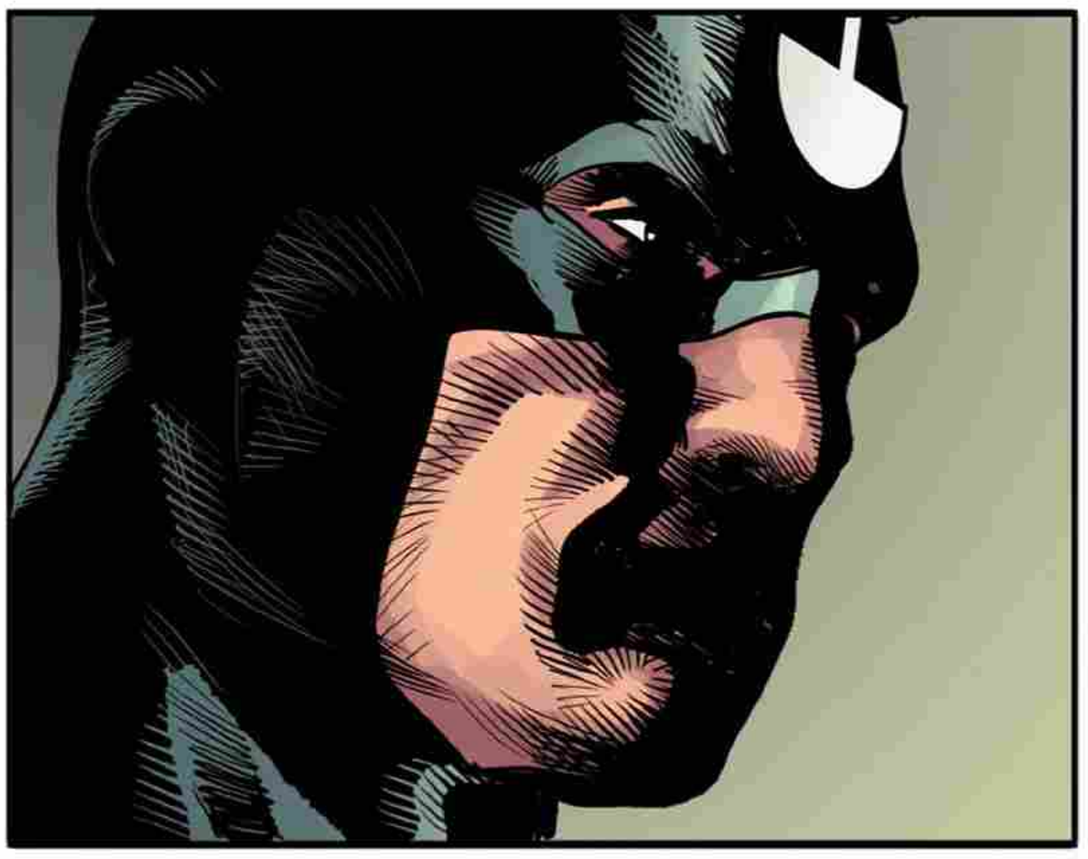
TELL ME WHAT YOU ARE HIDING.

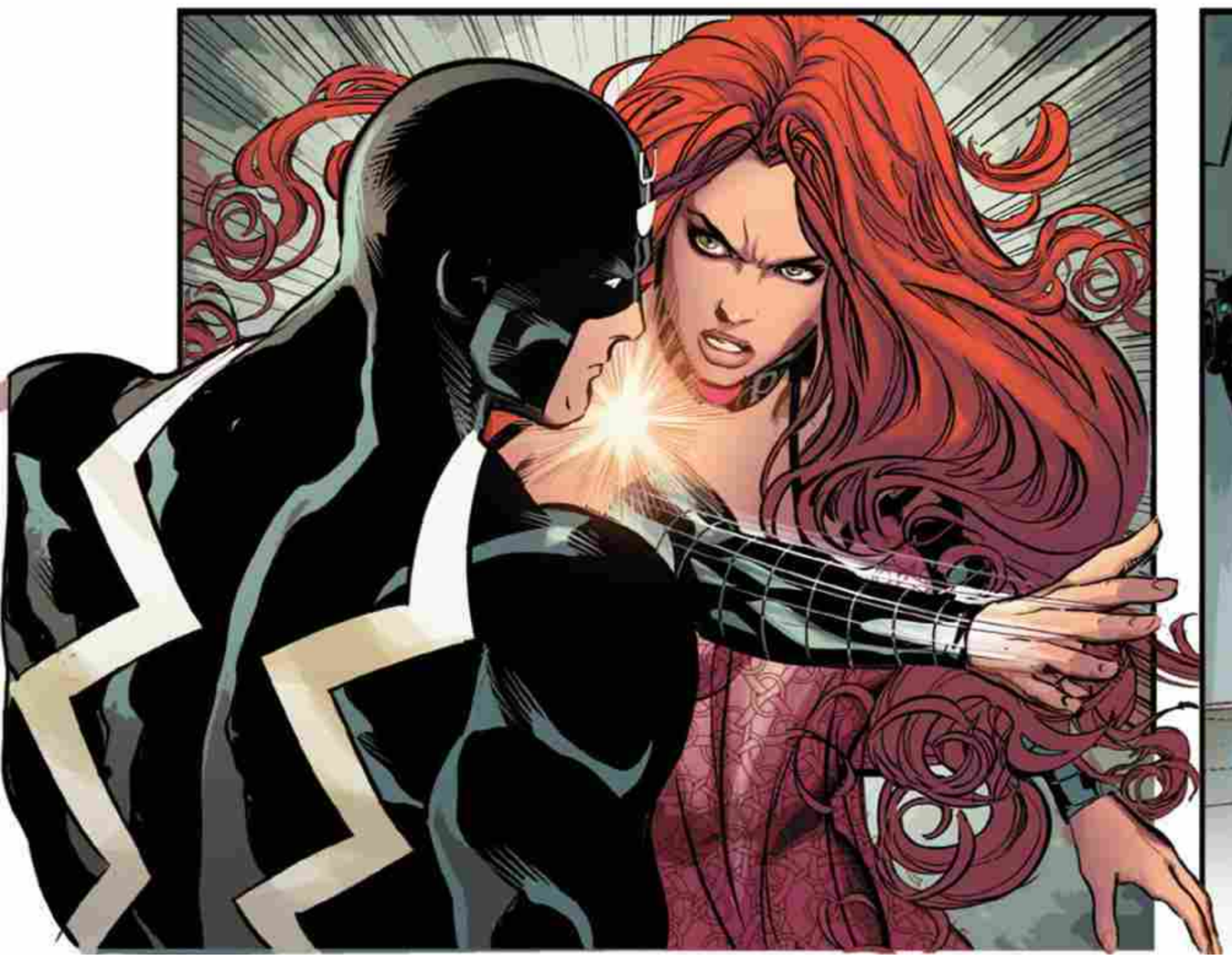
THIS IS HOW THE END BEGINS...

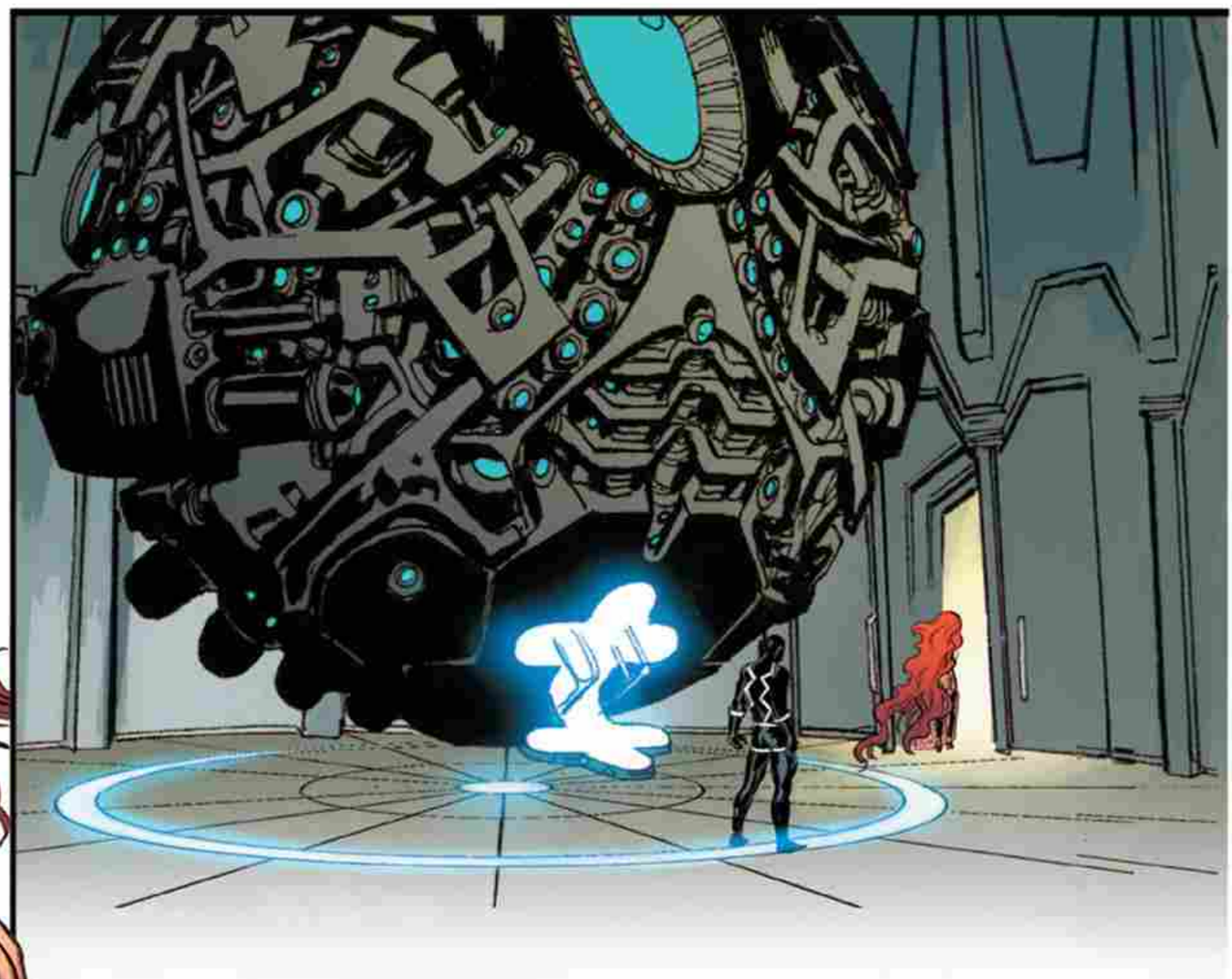
WHAT WE ARE...

WHAT WE WILL BE.

NO!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?







NECROPOLIS.
CITY OF THE DEAD.
WAKANDA.

AND YOU ARE PROPOSING WHAT, EXACTLY?

A SOLUTION...

...TO YOUR SITUATION, MOST CERTAINLY. TO OUR PROBLEM, HOPEFULLY.

WE NEED A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT ALL THIS.

YOU PROPOSE...A PARTNERSHIP?

AN UNDERSTANDING, BLACK SWAN. A COMMON GOAL.

DOES THIS INTEREST YOU?

I THINK IT DOES.

PERHAPS.

PERHAPS WHAT?

IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH, T'CHALLA?

YES. COME WITH ME...

WE NEED TO TALK.

WELL...

IS THIS CONCERNING MY OFFER OF PEACE TO YOUR SISTER? IF SO, SHE HAS RESPONDED AND SAID SHE IS CONSIDERING IT. WHICH IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR NOW.

I SUPPOSE I HAVE YOU TO THANK FOR THAT. SO...

THERE. YOU HAVE MY THANKS.

THERE IS NOTHING TO THANK ME FOR.

I HAVE A HARD TIME BELIEVING THAT QUEEN SHURI WOULD CONSIDER MY OFFER IF SOMEONE HAD NOT ARGUED IT...

ARE YOU SAYING YOU DID NOT?

NO. I DID.

THEN WHAT ARE--

THIS THING YOU STARTED...THIS THING BETWEEN YOU AND I--IT'S POISON FOR OUR NATIONS.

TWO GIANTS BATTLING EACH OTHER, COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF THE WORLD-- THE LIVES--THEY ARE DESTROYING AROUND THEM.

YOU WERE RIGHT, OUR PEOPLE SHOULD BE SPARED...BUT THAT IS NOT THE WORLD. WE KNOW THEY ARE ALWAYS THE FIRST TO PAY A MUCH-TOO-COSTLY PRICE.

I REGRET THAT.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

WHAT HAVE *I* DONE? NOTHING. I WAS IGNORED... AND YOU WERE LIED TO.

THERE WILL BE NO PEACE, NAMOR.

TODAY WILL ENSURE IT.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

WHAT GIANTS DO.

ATLANTIS.

WHY?

WHY DID YOU TELL ME THIS?

YOU SHOULD GO HOME AND HELP YOUR PEOPLE HOWEVER YOU CAN. THEY WILL NEED THEIR KING.

THIS IS NOT DONE.

IT NEVER IS.

AVENGERS TOWER.
LATER.

I THINK THAT WENT ALL RIGHT...

DO YOU WORRY THAT--

NO.

HE'LL DO THE JOB WELL...

AS WELL AS EITHER OF US WOULD.

FIGURE THAT THE LAST MONTH HAS BEEN AN ANOMALY AND WE'RE GOING TO AVERAGE 3 TO 4 INCURSIONS A MONTH.

AT THAT RATE...

REED, THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT--

AHEM. AT THAT RATE, PLUS FACTORING IN AN EXPONENTIAL GROWTH CURVE...

HE'LL HAVE THREE MONTHS.

AND THAT'S OUR WORST CASE SCENARIO.

THEY'RE ALL WORST CASE SCENARIOS.

WHAT'S THAT?

PROXIMITY ALERT.

TIED INTO S.W.O.R.D.'S EARLY WARNING SYSTEM. BUT THAT MEANS...

MY GOD.

INVASION.

DOCTOR STRANGE'S SANCTUM SANCTORUM.

WAKANDA.

THE JEAN GREY SCHOOL.

SNIKT!

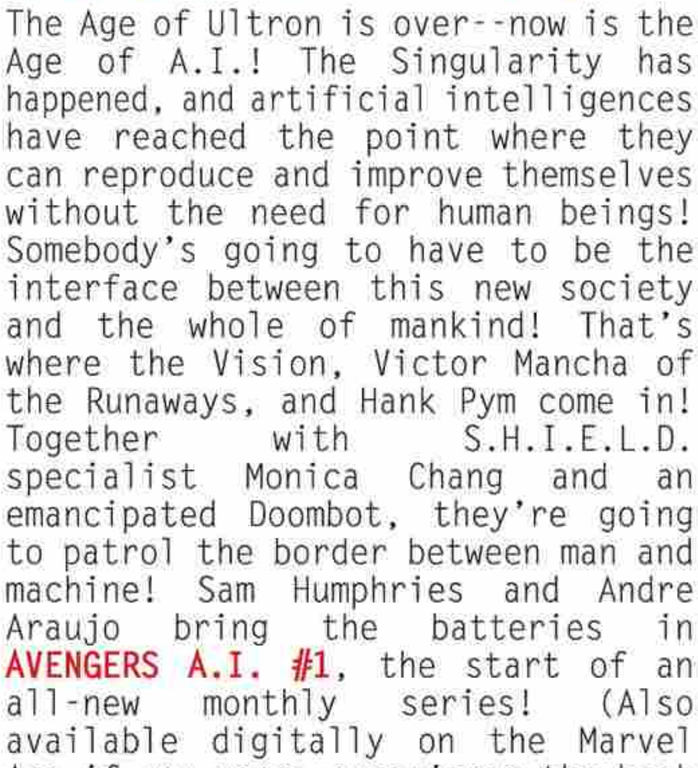
SNIKT!

ATLANTIS.

THE ASSEMBLY!

YOUR ONE-STOP NEWS SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS AVENGERS!

The Age of Ultron is over--now is the Age of A.I.! The Singularity has happened, and artificial intelligences have reached the point where they can reproduce and improve themselves without the need for human beings! Somebody's going to have to be the interface between this new society and the whole of mankind! That's where the Vision, Victor Mancha of the Runaways, and Hank Pym come in! Together with S.H.I.E.L.D. specialist Monica Chang and an emancipated Doombot, they're going to patrol the border between man and machine! Sam Humphries and Andre Araujo bring the batteries in **AVENGERS A.I. #1**, the start of an all-new monthly series! (Also available digitally on the Marvel App if you wanna experience the book in true A.I. style!)



Hello, Earth's Mightiest!

About time you had a (SMASHING!) science superheroine! Izzy Kane makes us aspiring (high school) science nerds look cool.

Exospecs on,
Janna S.
Manila, Philippines

Dear Marvel,

I want to start by saying I am an enormous Marvel fan. There's not an entertainment company out there that has produced more comics and products that I've loved more than Marvel. It has always seemed to be the very essence of what fun and adventurous escapism should be to me.

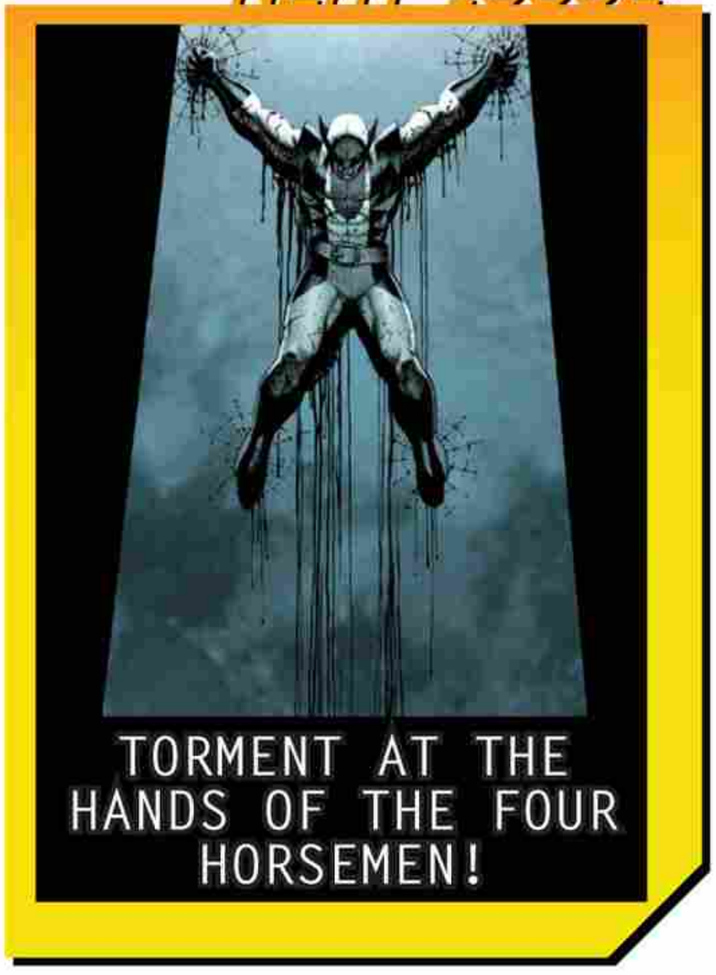
*These days, I don't recognize Marvel as the fun and amazing universe for everyone. What I'm seeing more and more are stories fit for cynical grown-ups with a need to feel that comics are "legitimate" so they don't feel nerdy reading "kid's stuff". I picked up **UNCANNY AVENGERS #3** today and it really was the last straw for me. The art was flawless and beautiful. The story was interesting. But I am sick to death of the adult language in Marvel books. On the back page, you featured fan art from a kid who loved the Avengers. It is so cool that he felt inspired to make art by comic books. However, in this book that kids read, we have super heroes cursing and a crazed mob screaming, "Kill the sons of bitches!" This is totally inappropriate and strikes me as simply trying way, way too hard to be edgy and "hardcore". It doesn't come off as tough and edgy, it comes off as low class and foul. Marvel survived (and thrived) for so many decades under the vilified Comics Code Authority and still managed to consistently produce top-notch, quality, fun comics that could be read by anyone. Doing away with the Authority could have, and has on occasion, meant producing stories of meaningful topics previously off-limits. Instead, it seems the pinnacle of not being held accountable means saying "bitch" like a naughty junior high kid. Believe me, I'm no prude. I cuss like a sailor far too often, but I've never once missed seeing the same in a Marvel comic. I also realize that not everybody has the same level of comfort with these inclusions, so it confuses me that it would be included seeing as how it would alienate members of the audience. And I don't believe it adds anything to the story or the level of drama or impact in the slightest, knowing that less adult words can be substituted without sacrificing the feeling of immediacy. Yes, I know in the real world people curse, but in this world there are people lifting tanks over their heads, so gritty realism is a strange concern.*

For my entire life, Marvel comics have been a family affair. Some of the best memories in my life are lying on the living room floor thumbing through comics with my Dad while waiting for Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends to start. I would love to continue that tradition with fresh new work, but I don't feel comfortable sitting down and reading with my kids out of modern Marvel comics. I feel driven to simply commit to collecting work from the past. Which isn't all that bad, because Marvel did always produce the most amazing comic books in the world!

Till we meet again,
Chase Bowman

Thanks for your letter, Chase! First off, let me say that I think it's great both that you want to share your love of Marvel with your kids, and that you scrutinize their entertainment before allowing them to enjoy it. And I'm sorry that you feel that some of what we're doing goes beyond the bounds of what you're comfortable with. What I can tell you is that we strive to be both contemporary and responsible in what we say and do and in how we say and do it. And you're right, that's not always going to be to everybody's tastes. Even during the Comics Code days, there were people who objected to some of the elements in our stories. At the end of the day, it's absolutely your responsibility to determine what is and isn't right for you and your kids, just as it's our responsibility to produce the best, most relevant, most exciting stories that we're able to. And hopefully, we will meet again!

NEXT ISSUE:



TORMENT AT THE HANDS OF THE FOUR HORSEMEN!

AVENGERS TITLES ON SALE

AVENGERS #15
PRELUDE TO INFINITY! ALIEN REFUGEES CRASH TO EARTH!

AVENGERS #16
PRELUDE TO INFINITY! THE AVENGERS BATTLE TO QUIET THE MAD EARTH!

AVENGERS ARENA #12
THE SHOCKING FINALE OF "GAME ON!"

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #17
THE ENEMY WITHIN! THE MAGNITRON'S GRAND DESIGN IS UNCOVERED!

CAPTAIN MARVEL #14
THE ENEMY WITHIN CONCLUSION! AND A DRAMATIC CHANGE FOR CAPTAIN MARVEL!

NEW AVENGERS #8
PRELUDE TO INFINITY! BLACK BOLT'S SECRETS THREATEN TO TEAR THE INHUMANS APART!

SECRET AVENGERS #6
TRAPPED AND OUTGUNNED IN ENEMY TERRITORY!

SECRET AVENGERS #7
WHAT REALLY HAPPENED ON A.I.M. ISLAND? THE TRUTH REVEALED!

UNCANNY AVENGERS #10
THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF DEATH ARE UNLEASHED!

YOUNG AVENGERS #7
A NEW MEMBER! AND THE KREE KILL KREW!

YOUNG AVENGERS #8
A RACE ACROSS THE MULTIVERSE! AND A SHOCK FOR YOUNG LOKI!

AVENGERS A.I. #1
FROM THE WRECKAGE OF AGE OF ULTRON, A NEW TEAM RISES TO FACE A NEW MENACE!

A + X #10
THE BLACK WIDOW AND FANTOMEX! THE SCARLET WITCH AND DOMINO!

ALSO ON SALE!

MARVEL UNIVERSE AVENGERS: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES #16

WHAT IF AVX #1-4

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE! E-MAIL US AT: **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM.** PLEASE MARK ALL E-MAILS **"OKAY TO PRINT"**

E
E
M
R
I
Zone